



City of Amesbury Lakes and Waterways Commission

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By Ellie at 11:32 am, 8/2/21

Meeting Minutes for 6-17-2021 7:00 PM

Location: Senior Center, 68 Elm St.

Attendees: Tom Murphy, Thomas Volper, Art O'Dea, and Robert Desmarais – Director of Public Works.

Completing Minutes: Art O'Dea, Acting Secretary

I. Administrative Business

A. Call to Order

Tom Murphy, acting chair called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

B. Review of Past Minutes (May)

- Approval of the Minutes from the May meeting was tabled until the next meeting.

C. Review of Meeting Venue

- Since the last meeting, the city and state requirements now permit meetings can continue to be held remotely or in a hybrid mode.
- Tom M. will poll the members for preference for venue and make a proposal prior to the next meeting.

II. Engineer's update

A. Engineer's Report

- Rob gave the Engineer's update; all water bodies were at normal level. Currently, still trying to hold back water to prepare for a drought, which has occurred the last few summers. Everything is at normal pool.
- Potential issues with surrounding communities in the event of a drought, and the city is preparing for the potential impact.
- Upper pedestrian bridge in the upper millyard requires repair and plans to implement the repair are underway.

B. Lake Gardner

- Rob reported on the drowning incident at the lake.
- Proposed alternatives on sand replenishment were discussed
- An emergency boat ramp is under consideration

B. Stormwater Management Plan Guidance

- The Lakes and Waterways Commission is an advisory body on the plan and its function is the primary mechanism for providing public involvement in the Stormwater Management Plan (SMP).
- Legislation requires regulation of storm discharge and the SMP is developed to ensure compliance to the regulations. Rob provided a map describing the locations of stormwater retention basins and the current conditions. The components of the system are generally overdue for maintenance.

- The consensus of the members was that resources should be applied to the DPW to implement timely maintenance and upkeep of the system.
- Tom M. raised the issue on snow removal and salt deposits throughout the city as there is no guidance or regulations around how much and where salt/sand is dropped. Rob indicated that the DPW is presenting plans to implement increased levels of controls on salt and sand deposition that can reduce the amount of salt deposited and improve efficiencies of the salt and sand deposition operation. Recommendations from the L&WW Commission supporting investment in resources on increase controls on salt and sand deposition can be submitted to support the efforts of the DPW.
- The impact on fertilizer application to waterways is another example of public input to the SMP that the Lakes and Waterways Commission can provide.
- Rob will plan to meet at least annually with the Commission.
- Tom M. will add to the agenda of a future meeting how the Commission can meet its responsibility for providing public feedback on the SMP.

C. Battis Farm Management Plan

- Copies of emails on the open spaces summit were distributed and will be discussed in an email distribution since few members were in attendance.
- Concerns were raised about fertilizer application so close to Lake Gardner and without a management plan there is no recourse for inappropriate fertilizer usage adjacent to a waterbody.
- Similar concerns were raised regarding Woodsom Farm.
- Bernadette provided Tom M. with an update on her investigations on testing of phosphorous at Lake Gardner prior to the meeting that was discussed.
- Water treatment plant sludge is plowed into the soil next to Lake Gardner. Much of the plowing is done to spread sludge. Amesbury changes sludge deposit dropping every year to different location. Alum counteracts the phosphorus content, so is beneficial when added to soil near the lake. Rob mentioned that a study was performed on this matter within the past ten years and suggested it be reviewed. He offered that the DPW would be responsive to guidance on revised procedures.

D. Bylaws: Revision of Section 2 sent to Mayor's Office

- Tom M. is awaiting a response from his email to the Mayor's office

III. Discuss Revisions of Waterways Assessment

- *Powow and Merrimack River:* A history section for the Powow River will be added; reference to the brownfields site at the lower millyard and NE shore can be revised to reflect the issues have been addressed. The paragraph relating to the rehab of the lower millyard and reference to the old DPW location can be removed. In the Merrimack River section, changes to the structures, relating to access were recommended. Updates to water quality will be researched and revised.
- ***Items from Waterways Assessment revisions for further discussion:***
- *Art to contact Craig Bailey about logistics for access enhancements at the boat ramp and report at the next meeting. The potential development at the adjoining marina suggests an accelerated timeline on this matter*
- *Agenda item for future meeting: Lakes and Waterways should be the repository for all water testing.*

- *Upon completion of the Waterways Assessment review, the commission should consider an action to consolidate and extract all recommendations and future actions from to Assessment to present to the Mayor in a formal request.*

IV. Meeting Adjourned:

Motion to adjourn- Art, seconded at 9:20 PM.

Next meeting: July 15, 2021- location TBD